

Message Text

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INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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-----054036 272037Z /42

R 271940Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6239
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USBERLIN
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 03597

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, BQG
SUBJECT: PROPOSED FRG INVITATION TO INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
UNION DELEGATES TO VISIT BERLIN

REFS: (A) BONN 3435 (NOTAL)
(B) 77 SOFIA 2002 (NOTAL)
(C) 77 BONN 15250 (NOTAL)
(D) 77 STATE 223227 AND PREVIOUS (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: THE BONN GROUP WAS INFORMED ON FEBRUARY 21
THAT THE BUNDESTAG IS REPORTEDLY CONSIDERING ISSUING AN
INVITATION TO VISIT BERLIN TO DELEGATES ATTENDING THE
SEPTEMBER 1978 INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU) MEETING
IN BONN. THE FRG REP SAID, ON A PERSONAL BASIS, THAT
HE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSAL AND ASKED FOR
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ALLIED VIEWS. THE ALLIED REPS SHARED HIS RESERVA-
TIONS TO VARYING DEGREES BUT ENCOURAGED THE FRG TO
DEAL MORE THOROUGHLY WITH THE PROBLEM, WHICH IS STILL
AN INTERNAL QUESTION, BEFORE ENGAGING THE ALLIES. WE
HAVE, HOWEVER, SUGGESTED EARLY BONN GROUP CONSIDERATION
OF POSSIBLE BERLIN PROBLEMS WHICH MAY ARISE AT THE IPU
MEETING IN LISBON IN MARCH 1978. END SUMMARY

1. AT THE FEBRUARY 21 BONN GROUP MEETING, THE FRG REP (VON BRAUNMUEHL) SAID THERE WERE INFORMAL AND UNCONFIRMED INDICATIONS THAT THE PRESIDUM OF THE BUNDESTAG PROPOSES TO INVITE THE PARTICIPANTS IN THE IPU MEETING TO BE HELD IN BONN IN SEPTEMBER 1978 TO BERLIN. ON A PERSONAL BASIS, VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID HE WAS NOT HAPPY ABOUT THE PROPOSAL SINCE THE SOVIETS WOULD PUT PRESSURE ON EAST EUROPEAN AND THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES NOT TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION. HE ASKED FOR ALLIED VIEWS, ALTHOUGH HE UNDERSTOOD (AND WE CONFIRMED) THEY WOULD BE ON A PERSONAL BASIS.

2. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS, VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHETHER MAYOR STOBBE WOULD ALSO ISSUE AN INVITATION AND MEICHSNER SAID THAT THE LAST TIME THE IPU MET IN GERMANY WAS IN 1928. THE MEETING THEN WAS HELD IN BERLIN.

3. THE FRENCH REP (RICHARD) SAID THAT SUCH AN INVITATION WOULD CAUSE TROUBLE WITH THE SOVIETS. ALTHOUGH THERE SHOULD BE NO LEGAL OBJECTION IT IT, HE QUESTIONED ITS POLITICAL WISDOM. THE UK REP (EYERS) SAID THAT THIS WAS LARGE AN INTERNAL FRG MATTER. SINCE THE IPU IS REPORTEDLY A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION, HE SAID HE SAW NO QUESTION WHICH COULD ARISE AS TO THE LEGALITY OF

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THE VISIT. (COMMENT: IF IT WERE A GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND WERE TO HOLD A MEETING IN BERLIN, THE QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT WOULD MANDATE AN INVITATION BY THE BERLIN SENAT TOGETHER WITH OR IN ADDITION TO THE BUNDESTAG INVITATION. END COMMENT) HOWEVER, HE SAID THAT THE RESERVATIONS WHICH VON BRAUNMUEHL EXPRESSED WERE ONES WHICH OTHERS WOULD SHARE. THE PRIMARY QUESTION IN SUCH MATTERS IS WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF BERLIN AND EYERS SAID SUCH A VISIT COULD DO MORE HARM TO THE FRG AND BERLIN THAN GOOD.

4. THE US REP SAID THAT, ASSUMING THE PARLIAMENTARIANS WERE MERELY GOING TO BERLIN AS TOURISTS, NOT TO HOLD A MEETING, NO INVITATION FROM STOBBE WOULD APPEAR TO BE REQUIRED BY THE QA. ON THE OTHER HAND, SUCH AN INVITATION (WHICH IS A NORMAL THING FOR A MAYOR TO ISSUE) WOULD MAKE IT EASIER TO EXPLAIN THE VISIT. WITH RESPECT TO VON BRAUNMUEHL'S REQUEST FOR ALLIED VIEWS, THE US REP SAID THAT THIS IS A DIFFICULT QUESTION. ON THE ONE HAND, WE WANT TO AVOID UNNECESSARY PROBLEMS WITH THE SOVIETS OVER BERLIN. IN ADDITION, IT WOULD BE UNFORTUNATE IF THERE WERE A PUBLIC INVITATION AND

THEN A LARGE-SCALE REFUSAL OF THE INVITATION BY IPU

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USIA-06 ACDA-12 TRSE-00 OIC-02 EB-08 /096 W
-----054078 272038Z /42

R 271940Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6240
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DELEGATES. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE SHOULD NOT SEEK TO
AVOID PROBLEMS WITH THE SOVIETS AT THE COST OF TREATING
BERLIN AS SUCH A SENSITIVE SUBJECT THAT WE DISCOURAGE
WHAT SHOULD BE UNOBJECTIONABLE ACTIVITIES OR VISITS
THERE AND THEREBY GIVE THE BERLINERS, AND OTHERS, THE
IDEA THAT VISITS TO THE CITY ARE UNWANTED. AS A FIRST
STEP, WE SUGGESTED THAT THE FRG ITSELF SHOULD LOOK AT
THE BALANCE SHEET OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES WITH REGARD
TO SUCH A VISIT BEFORE SEEKING ALLIED VIEWS.

5. VON BRAUNMUEHL CONFIRMED THAT THIS MATTER HAD NOT
YET BEEN THOROUGHLY EXAMINED BY THE FRG BUT THAT IT
WAS PREDICTABLE THAT THE VISIT WOULD BE ATTACKED BY THE
SOVIETS. HE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND WHY THE
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ALLIES APPEARED SO CONCERNED ABOUT THE VISIT OF EC PRESIDENT JENKINS (REF A) BUT WERE LESS CONCERNED ABOUT THE VISIT OF A LARGE NUMBER OF PARLIAMENTARIANS.

6. EYERS REPLIED THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD SEE THE IPU VISIT AS A STRAIGHT PROVOCATION. THE JENKIN VISIT, HOWEVER, COULD BE MORE DIFFICULT FROM ANOTHER STANDPOINT AS WELL SINCE JENKINS IS GOING TO BERLIN IN AN OFFICIAL CAPACITY WHILE THE IPU IS A PRIVATE ORGANIZATION. VON BRAUNMUEHL RESPONDED THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE BUNDESTAG WOULD BE INVITING THE PARLIAMENTARIANS WHILE JENKINS WAS GOING ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE.

7. THE US REP SAID THAT HE HAD NOT VOICED CONCERN ABOUT THE MERE FACT THAT JENKINS WAS GOING TO BERLIN; THE QUESTION WAS WHAT HE WAS GOING TO BE DOING THERE. A SPEECH ON DIRECT ELECTIONS, WITH THE ATTENDANT PUBLICITY, WOULD BE SURE TO AROUSE THE SOVIETS' IRE AND JENKINS COULD BE MADE AWARE OF THIS. THE IPU VISIT IS MORE COMPLICATED. THE PEOPLE INVOLVED ARE POLITICIANS, NOT BUREAUCRATS, AND POLITICIANS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL OUT OF THINGS THEY DO NOT LIKE. FOR THE ALLIES TO BE IN POSITION OF TELLING THE BUNDESTAG THAT IT SHOULD NOT DO SOMETHING WHICH NONE OF US REGARD AS ILLEGAL WOULD REQUIRE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION AS WELL AS CONSULTATION WITH CAPITALS. AT THIS STAGE, IT DOES NOT APPEAR APPROPRIATE FOR THE ALLIES TO BE ASKED TO INTERVENE IN SOMETHING WHICH IS STILL A PURELY INTERNAL FRG MATTER.

8. VON BRAUNMUEHL SAID THAT HE WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSED INVITATION
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BEFORE RETURNING THE SUBJECT TO THE BONN GROUP.

9. COMMENT: THE DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THE SOVIET-INSPIRED DIFFICULTIES POSED BY THE INCLUSION OF BERLIN DEPUTIES IN THE FRG DELEGATION AT THE SOFIA IPU MEETING LAST SEPTEMBER (REFS B, C AND D) AND THE ASSURANCES WHICH THE US AND OTHER DELEGATIONS SOUGHT TO OBTAIN THAT THE GDR WOULD NOT MAKE PROBLEMS WHEN THE IPU MEETS IN EAST BERLIN IN 1980.

10. WE HAVE LITTLE DOUBT THAT IF THE IPU DELEGATES ARE

INVITED BY THE BUNDESTAG TO BERLIN, THE SOVIETS WILL
COMPLAIN AND WILL SEEK TO DISSUADE ATTENDANCE. FOR
THE MOMENT, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE IT BEST TO ENCOURAGE
THE FOREIGN OFFICE TO HAVE THE SUBJECT VETTED WITHIN THE
FRG BEFORE THE ALLIES BECOME INVOLVED.

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SHOULD THE FRG DECIDE TO GO FORWARD WITH THE INVITATION,
WITH FULL AWARENESS OF THE FACT THAT THE SOVIETS WILL
PROBABLY PROTEST AND MAY PERSUADE A NUMBER OF DELEGATES
TO DECLINE THE INVITATION, WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD SUPPORT
THE FRG.

11. WE UNDERSTAND THE NEXT IPU MEETING IS TO BE HELD
IN LISBON BEGINNING MARCH 22 AND HAVE SUGGESTED THAT
THE SUBJECT OF THAT MEETING BE DISCUSSED IN THE BONN
GROUP AT AN EARLY DATE. THE FRG REP INFORMS US THE
FRG HAS THE SUBJECT UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION AND WILL
INTRODUCE IT IN THE BONN GROUP WHEN PRELIMINARY PLANNING

IS COMPLETED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISITS, INVITATIONS, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, MEETING DELEGATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BONN03597
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780090-0254
Format: TEL
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780210/aaaaaijp.tel
Line Count: 286
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 96c1cdcc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 BONN 3435, 77 SOFIA 2002, 77 BONN 15250, 77 STATE 223227
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3427551
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PROPOSED FRG INVITATION TO INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION DELEGATES TO VISIT BERLIN
TAGS: PGOV, WB, BQG, IPU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/96c1cdcc-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014